

Good to know

Be able to engage and support team members

Team members who are engaged with their organisation work as hard as they are able because they understand how good their organisation is and are committed to its vision. They understand how it will get there and they feel involved in helping it to improve how work is done and in achieving its goals. They feel appreciated for their contribution. They are confident that the organisation will treat them well according to the values and expectations of the organisation and these are founded on policies and procedures to give them support when they need it.



Engagement is about creating a culture - this cannot be imposed by managers. According to ACAS (2014) there are four factors that contribute to engagement. They are:

- Leaders with a vision who value how individuals contribute.
- Line managers who empower rather than control their staff.
- Values that are lived and not just spoken, leading to a sense of trust and integrity.
- Employees who have the chance to voice their views and concerns.

Emmott (2006) found three main drivers of engagement:

Opportunities to feed views upwards

Feeling well-informed about what is happening

Believing in commitment to the organisation by your manager

Some things you can do to help create a culture in which team members feel engaged include:

Communicate

- Team objectives
- Individual objectives
- Plans
- Encourage suggestions for improvement
- Recognise and appreciate achievements
- Ask what motivates team members

Explain

- Organisational:
 - policies
 - procedures
 - values
 - expectations

Support

- Ask team members:
 - what they need
 - when they need it
- When needed, give:
 - help
 - encouragement
 - advice



Policies

Each organisation has a different set of circumstances and so it develops its own set of policies. They are decisions to support various aspects of organisational management and to conform to legal and ethical requirements, and it is important to keep to them.

Procedures

Procedures are a formalised and standardised approach for dealing with major work tasks and issues. They describe exactly what must be done and how. They also help to make sure that policies are applied consistently. They are usually developed together with employees. They must be followed.

Values

Values are beliefs in what is best or good for the organisation and what should happen. Stronger values have more effect on people's behaviour. Implied values that are reinforced by the behaviour of managers can have a great influence on people. Values which are communicated but not reflected in managers' behaviour may have little effect on people.



Styles of Leadership

As a team leader you need to be observant and flexible in your approach so that you can understand what's needed in different situations and to lead different types of team member depending on their needs and the situation.

Directing

For example, someone new to the team may need to have tasks carefully explained, with clear instructions how to do them and by when. This will help them and help to create a culture of doing things well.

Supporting

A third team member may be very capable of doing their work and improving on it but likes to have plenty of encouragement, support and reassurance from you, and so your style needs to be supportive.

Coaching

A more experienced team member may still need advice as well as help and support but can also suggest their own ideas for doing the work, so you need to involve them more by using a coaching style.

Delegating

A fourth team member is very experienced, confident and knows what they are doing. They like to be left alone to get on with the work. You can use a delegating style with them by giving them new tasks to do that will develop their capability. Give them clear guidelines about what's needed by when, and give them the authority to do these new tasks.



Motivation

Different people are motivated differently, so the best way to find out what motivates is to ask them. Then do as many of these things as you are able and in line with organisational requirements. Herzberg distinguished between 'hygiene factors' which are work conditions and 'motivators' without which people will become demotivated.

Motivators are things about work which positively motivate people. Adams (1963) and later Argyris and Schon (1978) found that in general people are more motivated if they feel they are treated fairly and equitably compared with their team members and peers (Equity Theory).

Latham (2007) found that people are also motivated by having goals that they believe are challenging but attainable and which they participate in setting (Goal Theory). People are more highly motivated if they believe they can control the means to achieve a valued reward – their expectations.

